

Struck by the Light

Acts 9:1-9; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 112-121; *Early Writings*, pp. 200-202

You may have seen a bully in action at school or in your neighborhood. You may have been bullied. Bullies try to make others feel afraid. Saul was like a bully. He got the priests to give him power to arrest new Christians. But God had other plans for Saul.

Saul's ferocious scowl was famous. He was like a thundercloud with legs. His voice boomed like thunder. And lightning almost seemed to sizzle around him. He was as dangerous as lightning, too. His only goal in life was to search out and stamp out the new Christians.

Saul and his assistants strode purposefully down the road. They were headed for the famous old city of Damascus. Official letters they carried gave them permission to capture Christians. Then they would take them back to Jerusalem where they would be put to death.

The hot noonday sun blazed down on the travelers. But they marched steadily on. They were intent on their mission even though they were tired. They had traveled almost 150 miles in the last few days. Now Damascus was almost within sight.



Then with no warning at all, in the middle of this very ordinary day, it happened! A beam of light flashed down from heaven! It was far, far brighter than the noonday sun. The travelers fell to the ground in shock. Saul stared into the astonishing brightness. He couldn't believe it. It was not his imagination. He saw Jesus in the light!

And then Jesus spoke to him. "Saul, Saul," Jesus said, "why do you persecute Me?" In that moment, Saul understood. Jesus really was God. He really was! And He really had risen from the dead, just as the Christians believed. And Saul understood what Jesus was saying to him: "When you persecute My followers, Saul, you are really persecuting Me!"

Saul could only stare and whisper, "Who are You, Lord?" "I am Jesus, whom you persecute," Jesus answered. "Get up and go into the city. There you will be told what you must do." And then the light was gone.

The men traveling with Saul were speechless. They had certainly seen the light, but they had not seen Jesus. They had

The Message

God's love is like a
light in darkness.

Memory Verse

*"I have loved you
with an everlasting
love"*

(Jeremiah 31:3, NIV).

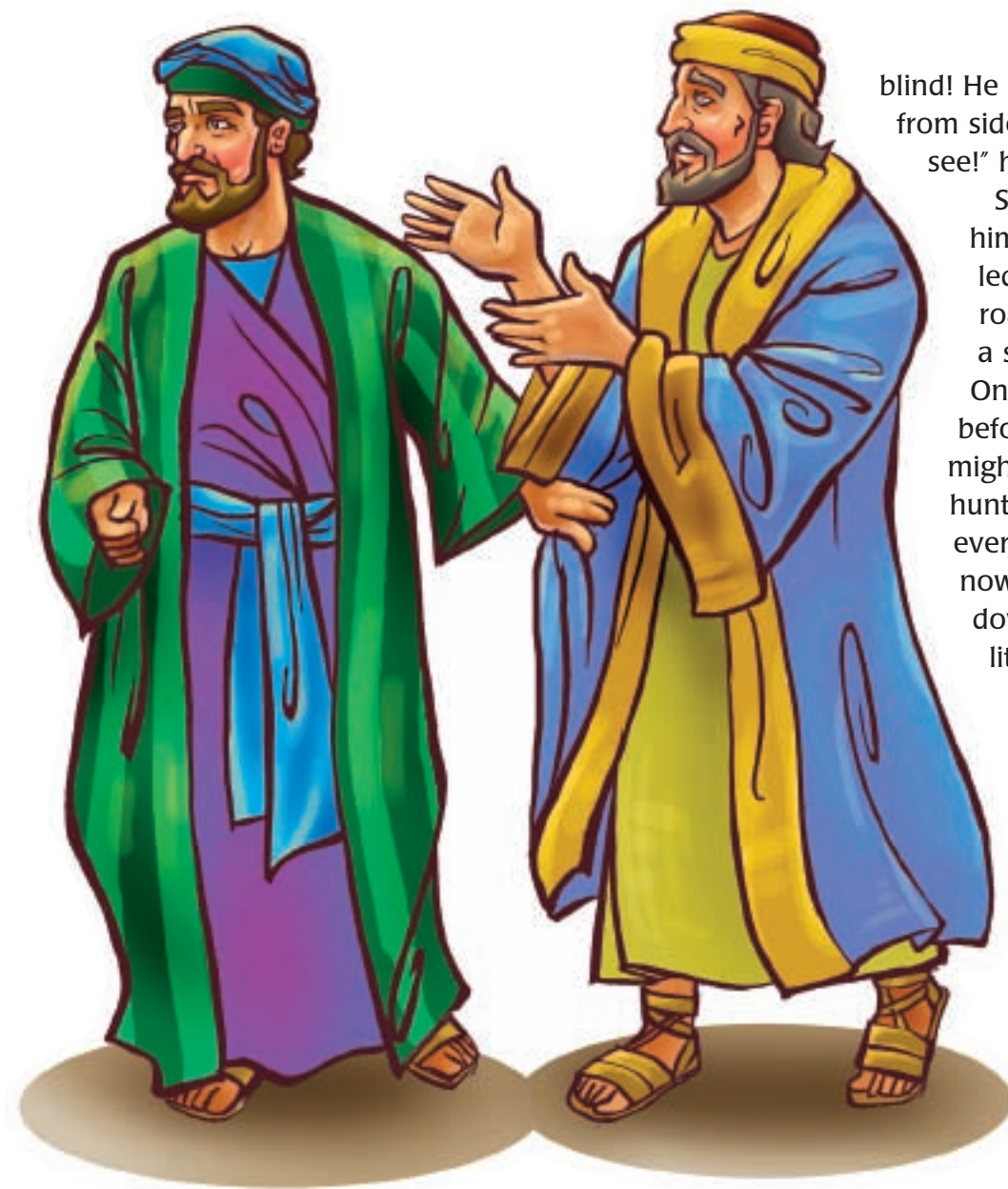
heard a noise, but they had not understood Jesus' words. They struggled to their feet, looking wildly at each other.

Saul looked around too. But he couldn't see a thing. He was blind! Absolutely, totally

blind! He turned his head from side to side. "I can't see!" he whispered.

Saul's friends took him by the hand. They led him down the road to the city. What a strange procession! Only a few minutes before, Saul had been a mighty hunter, eager to hunt down and capture every Christian. And now he was being led down the road like a little child.

Saul's feet scuffed along through the dust. But he wasn't paying any attention to where he was being led. There was only one thought in his mind. He had seen Jesus! He had really seen Jesus!



S A B B A T H

THINK Go for a walk with your family. Pretend you are Saul going toward Damascus. How did Saul walk? Quickly? Slowly? Did he drag his feet?

DO Look at a map to see how far it is from Jerusalem to Damascus. In which countries are modern-day Jerusalem and Damascus found?

PRAY Thank God that you can walk in safety.

M O N D A Y

READ Read and discuss Acts 22:3-11 during family worship. In Bible times it took five to six days to walk from Jerusalem to Damascus. Look at a Bible map. Try to figure out how many miles Saul walked each day. Write the number here.

DO Saul was blinded by the light. Try to find your way around a dark room or wear a blindfold for five minutes. Then thank God for your sight.

T U E S D A Y

READ With your family read about another time heaven opened in Matthew 3:13-17. What happened? Why is it dangerous to look directly at a strong light or the sun?

DO Take turns with two people. Have them lead you by the hands. Then you lead them. How easy is it to go along a path? Which was easier—to lead or be led?

PRAY Thank God that He sent His Son to lead us in the right way.

W E D N E S D A Y

READ Read Matthew 18:21-35. What does this tell us about God's attitude toward us when we do something wrong? How much is 70 times 7? Should you really keep count of the number of times you forgive someone?

DO Light a candle and talk about ways to share God's grace with others. Sing "This Little Light of Mine" before prayer. Ask God to give you a forgiving spirit.

THURSDAY

READ For worship today read and discuss John 3:16. Say the verse together. Then tell each person in your family what you love about them.

PRAY Review your memory verse together before prayer. Thank God for His wonderful love for your family.

ASK Ask your Mom if you can bake some heart-shaped cookies to share with your family. Save some for Friday night.

When Saul called Jesus "Lord" on the road to Damascus, he was accepting Jesus as his Ruler and King.



FRIDAY

READ During worship, read Acts 9:1-9 again. Act it out with the help of your family. Sing some praise songs before prayer. Then thank God for being with you all this week.

DO Talk about your Sabbath plans as you share your cookies with your family.

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PUZZLE

Directions: Changing the first letter of a word sometimes creates a whole new word. For instance, replace the first letter of "jump" with a "b" and the word will be "bump." Now look through the lesson to find a word that is spelled like the supplied word except for the first letter.

he	dead	hot	sight	go
_e	_ead	_ot	_ight	_o